THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) The Supreme Court *vide* its judgment dated 25.10.2007 in the case of Smt. Seema *Vs.* Ashwani Kumar has directed the States and Union Territories who have not acted in line with the directions given on 14.02.2006 shall forthwith do it and in no case later than three months from 25.10.2007. The Central Government has sought the comments of the State Governments/Union territories as regard the compliance of the direction of the Supreme Court.

(b) and (c) The information is being collected from the State Governments and Union Territories.

Suggestions and recommendations by Supreme Court and High Courts

†1771. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received suggestions and recommendations on different issues from High Courts and Supreme Court during the last three years, till date;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action Government has taken or is going to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Suitable action is taken from time-to-time.

Setting up of Environment Courts

1772. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that environment related court disputes are on the rise in the country; and

(b) if so, whether Government is planning to set up specialised Environment Courts in various parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) The Law Commission of India, in its 186th Report had *inter-alia* recommended setting up of environmental courts in each State, consisting of judicial and scientific experts in the field of environment of dealing with environmental disputes besides having appellate jurisdiction in respect of appeals under various Pollution Control Laws. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has, in principle, accepted the recommendations of the Law Commission with certain modifications. It proposes to set up a National Environment Tribunal and some Regional Environment Tribunal for groups of State for effective and expeditious disposal of civil cases relating to environment.

Memorandum by States on Mineral Policy

1773. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Ministers of five mineral-based States have met the Prime Minister and submitted a memorandum, asking for a favourable mineral policy;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details of their grievances; and

(c) what is the action plan of Government to address their apprehensions?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) to (c) Chief Ministers of State Government of Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh met Hon'ble Prime Minister on 19.12.2007 and submitted a memorandum on new Mineral Policy concerning grant of preference to value addition industries in grant of mineral concessions, continuing reservations for Public Sector Undertakings, grant of large area for prospecting for bulk minerals, levy of royalty on *ad-valorem* basis, encourage mining companies to use a portion of annual profits for socio-economic development, consultation with the State Governments for amendments in the Mines & Mineral (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957, change in procedure for grant of mineral concessions, export of iron ore and accruement of export duty on minerals to the States. The various issues raised in the Memorandum were discussed. The concerns of the Chief Ministers were heard and appropriately addressed in the New Mineral Policy.

Environmental hazards of mining

1774. DR. K. MALAISAMY:
SHRI S. ANBALAGAN:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) how many mining units were stopped from operation at the instance of Courts taking into account the environmental hazards around mining industry and the number of workers affected; and

(b) what are the safeguards ensured in this context to get over the environmental issues on the one side and to approach the court to modify its ordres on the other in the larger interest of mining industry and the workers?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) As per information available with the Indian Bureau of Mines, a subordinate office of the Ministry, mining operation for 444 mining units for major minerals have been stopped at the directions/orders of Courts on account of the environmental hazards around mining units, affecting 6745 workers.

(b) Mining activities are subject to compliance of various statutory approvals, including Mining Plan and Environment & Forest clearances and any violation of same invite action by regulatory agencies. The decisions of Government are open to judicial review.

Royalty and duties on iron-ore export

1775. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has been briefed by the Federation of Indian Mineral Industries (FIMI) that if the proposal to increase royalty and export duties on iron-ore is implemented, India would be the highest taxed country amongst major iron-ore producing regions and this would marginalize exports, resulting in the closure of many mines in the country;